



April 24, 2015

MEMO TO: Senator Mike Shirkey  
MEMO FROM: James Grant, MD, President  
RE: S-2 Version of Senate Bill 68

On behalf of the more than 15,000 physicians of the Michigan State Medical Society (MSMS), I am writing to provide our comments on the changes proposed in the S-2 version Senate Bill 68.

Senate Bill 68 accomplishes an important goal by establishing Advance Practice Registered Nursing as a fully licensed profession under the Public Health Code. Senate Bill 68 appropriately reflects the changes made to the delivery of health care in Michigan since the Public Health Code was originally crafted in 1978 by recognizing nurses with advanced training as a distinct profession. Senate Bill 68 will provide this profession as well as state regulators with better tools to assure quality and protect the public.

One of the major concerns of the medical community was the broad and open ended language contained in the original version of Senate Bill 68. To that end, the S-2 version makes great strides in preserving the stated goal of increasing access and recognizing the contributions of nurses with advance practice training while avoiding the use of terms that may have unintended consequences. The bill maintains the flexibility all the members of the health care team to function in a fashion that will continue to place an emphasis on patient safety.

The bill does create a distinction for an APRN with five or more years of experience. While prescribing would still require the involvement of a physician, it is unclear what this provision would mean for other services and tasks that may be performed by the APRN. This approach does not have a legislative precedent so we are still attempting to ascertain what the likely interpretation of this provision might mean over the long term.

We would like to be on record with you and the members of the Senate Health Committee that your process has been inclusive, thorough, and fair. While we may not agree with every decision made in the draft, MSMS had a reasonable opportunity to provide input at every step of this process. You and your staff deserve a great deal of credit for challenging conventional thinking on this issue and tirelessly driving toward consensus. The S-2 version is certainly a meaningful step forward in an ongoing process to resolve this issue.